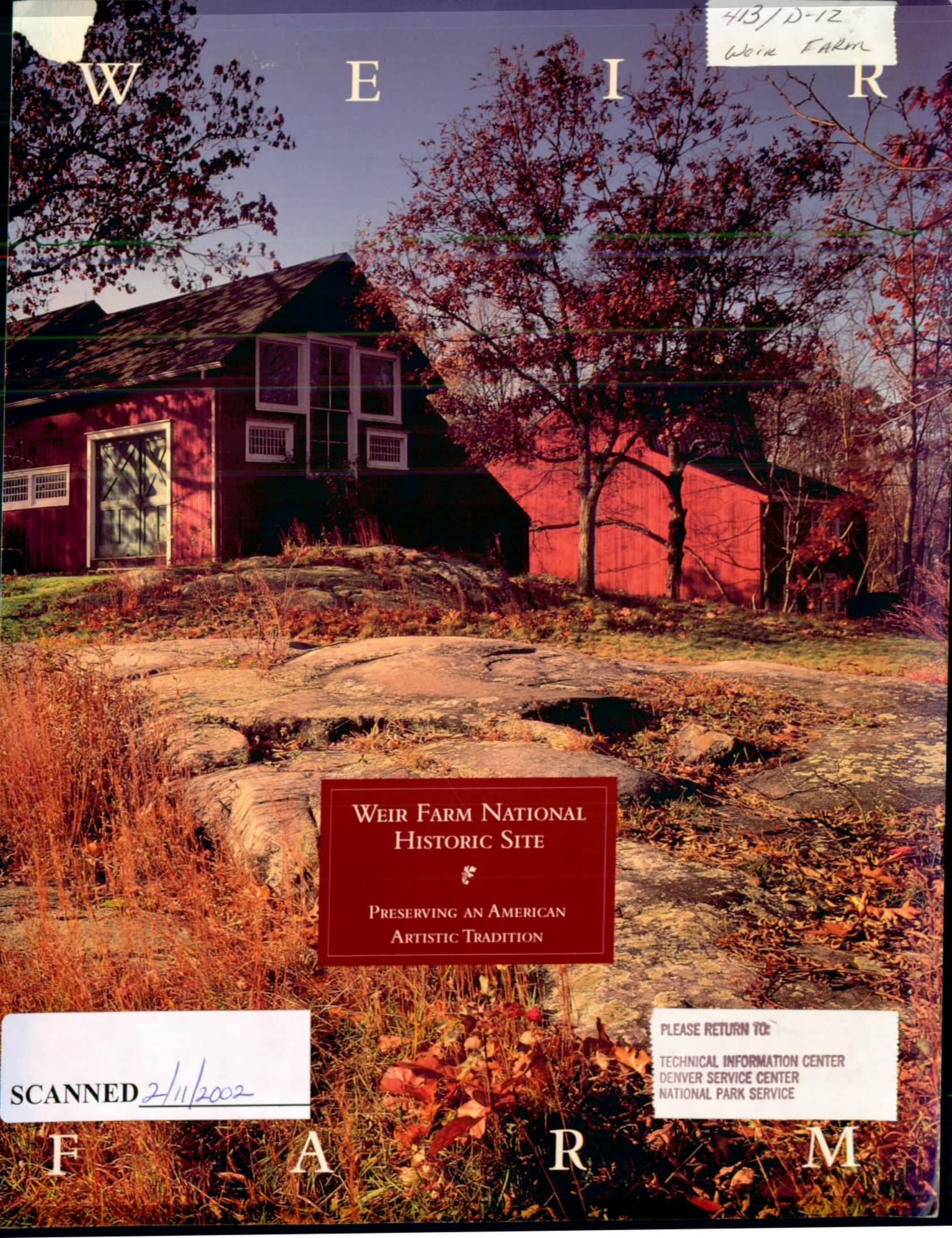


413/D-12
Weir Farm

W E I R



WEIR FARM NATIONAL
HISTORIC SITE



PRESERVING AN AMERICAN
ARTISTIC TRADITION

SCANNED 2/11/2002

PLEASE RETURN TO:
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F A R M

SUMMARY OF
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NORTH ATLANTIC REGION
DIVISION OF PLANNING
1995

*Weir Farm—
A Quiet
Marriage
of Art
and Landscape*



PORTRAIT OF J. ALDEN WEIR
John Singer Sargent



THE LAUNDRY, BRANCHVILLE
J. Alden Weir

IN 1882 THE AMERICAN ARTIST J. ALDEN WEIR TRADED A STILL LIFE HE HAD PURCHASED FOR \$560 FOR A 153-ACRE FARM IN SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT. WEIR DID NOT INTEND TO LIVE AT THE FARM, BUT AFTER HIS FIRST VISIT TO THE PROPERTY, HE BECAME INCREASINGLY DRAWN TO ITS ROCKY LANDSCAPE AND CLAPBOARDED BUILDINGS. HERE, HE SPENT NEARLY FOUR DECADES PAINTING, AND HIS FRIENDS CHILDE HASSAM, JOHN TWACHTMAN, EMIL CARLSEN, AND ALBERT PINKHAM RYDER OFTEN JOINED HIM TO CAPTURE THE FARM'S MAGIC ON CANVAS.

WEIR FARM HAS BEEN DRAWN AND PAINTED BY ARTISTS EVER SINCE. IT IS THE ONLY HISTORIC SITE IN THE NATION TO OFFER THE HOME, STUDIO, AND GROUNDS OF AN IMPORTANT LATE 19TH-CENTURY AMERICAN ARTIST WHOSE HOME AND LAND WAS INTEGRAL TO HIS ARTISTIC VISION. WEIR FARM NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IS CONNECTICUT'S ONLY NATIONAL PARK AND ONE OF TWO IN THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM TO FOCUS ON AMERICAN ART.



WEIR'S ORCHARD
Albert Pinkham Ryder



ROAD TO THE LAND OF NOD
Childe Hassam



THE LAUNDRY LINE
Sperry Andrews

Guided and self-guided tours will include the main house, used by three artistic families—the Weirs, Youngs, and Andrews—the Weir studio, and the Young studio, built by the sculptor Mahonri Young, who married Dorothy, one of Weir's daughters. These interiors, with their original furnishings, will give visitors an intimate portrait of the lives of the families and of the working environments of the artists.

After touring the main buildings, visitors can stroll through the fields, meadows, and woodlands,

and along the way, encounter the stone terraces, old fieldstone walls, and many other features designed with an artist's eye. The landscape will be restored to retain the open character that defined it during Weir's and Young's time. Selected areas of woodland will be cleared. The present system of footpaths will be expanded, where possible to follow historic routes, such as the former wagon road. Lost features, such as the "secret garden" and the farm fields cultivated by J. Alden Weir, will be restored.

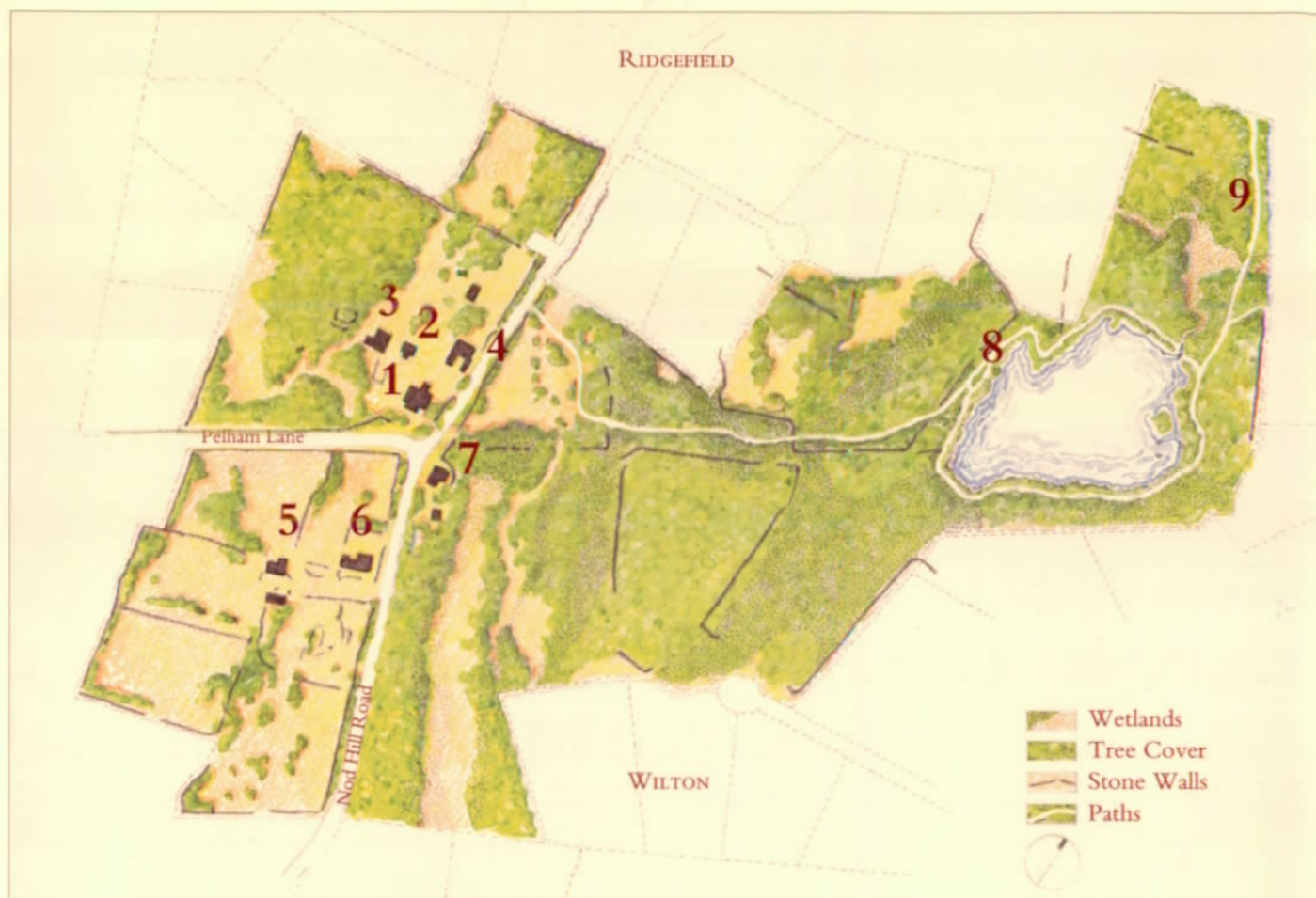
FOR ARTISTS OF THE FUTURE

The Weir Farm Heritage Trust will maintain an artists-in-residence program, sponsoring three to five artists at a time. Site educators will offer an arts program for area schools, both in the classroom and on the farm, using the site to explore art through many disciplines, such as history and geography.

MANAGING AND MAINTAINING THE SITE

The NPS and the Weir Farm Heritage Trust will work to acquire nearby properties for the Visitor Center and the administration and maintenance facility. New construction will take place only if existing structures cannot be adapted for these uses. Curatorial offices and a library will be included in the Visitor Center. In cooperation with owners of adjacent residential properties, the NPS will work to promote planting of vegetative screening. Additional plantings along the periphery of the park will help preserve the integrity of the setting and neighboring residents' privacy. In addition to the limited parking provided near the Visitor Center, the NPS will negotiate with area towns or private commercial property owners for overflow and bus parking during times of peak visitation and special events. Site managers will encourage visitors to travel to Weir Farm by mass transit, foot, and bicycle.

The Laundry Line, 1993, oil on canvas, Private Collection. *Weir's Orchard*, about 1885-1890, oil on canvas, and *Road to the Land of Nod*, 1910, oil on canvas, Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund.



WEIR FARM NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
Wilton and Ridgefield, Connecticut

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PLAN

1 MAIN HOUSE AND SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

The main house, with its original red clapboard, leaded glass windows, and period furnishings and artifacts will convey historic domestic use by the Weir and Young families, and current use by the Andrews family. Historic landscape and building features, including the Weir garden, will be preserved or restored.

2 WEIR STUDIO

J. Alden Weir's blue-painted ceiling with gold starfish, his pot belly stove,

his easels, brushes, and palettes and other studio furnishings will give visitors the sense that he worked here only yesterday.

3 YOUNG STUDIO

The scaffolding, armatures, and many of the tools Young used to create his sculptures, paintings, and etchings will be part of this furnished space, as will an exhibit on the current resident artist, Sperry Andrews.

4 MAIN BARN

This grey shingled structure, so often painted by Weir, Young, and Andrews, will remain as a picturesque record of the farm's agrarian past.

5 BURLINGHAM BARN

Rehabilitated for school programs, lectures, art classes, and workshops.

6 BURLINGHAM HOUSE

Rehabilitated for artists-in-residence housing. The sunken garden, vegetable gardens, and orchard planted by Cora Weir Burlingham, a daughter of J. Alden Weir, will be rehabilitated.

7 CARETAKER'S HOUSE AND GARAGE/BARN

House rehabilitated for Park Ranger housing. Garage/Barn rehabilitated and expanded for studio space for the artists-in-residence program. Nearby 15-car parking area will be retained.

8 POND, DAM, AND WOODLAND

Landscape features around the pond will be restored selectively. The dam will be stabilized, and the pond built by Weir will be monitored and maintained. The summer house and the boat-house will be reconstructed if sufficient architectural information is available.

9 FOOTPATH SYSTEM

The system will be expanded to form a loop and link adjacent open spaces, which include The Nature Conservancy property and Ridgefield conservation land.



AFTERNOON BY THE POND
J. Alden Weir



CONNECTICUT BIRCHES
J. Alden Weir

A CELEBRATION OF PLACE

Julian Alden Weir and his artist friends painted nearly every aspect of Weir Farm—the gently rolling meadows, the dense woodlands, the orchards, the cultivated fields, the pond with its charming summer house. Today, 60 of the 238 acres once owned by Weir remain and the house, studios, and grounds are remarkably unchanged. The Farm is one of the few intact reminders of an important 19th-century artistic milieu—a place cherished and celebrated over and over again in canvases that celebrate the brilliant color and light of American Impressionism.

With implementation of the National Park Service (NPS) 20-year General Management Plan and appropriate funding to operate the site, art enthusiasts and students of art will be given the rare opportunity of seeing this nearly untouched landscape preserved as the artists saw it—and of viewing simultaneously the paintings inspired by the setting. The NPS Plan will rehabilitate and restore both the landscape and its buildings, and provide necessary facilities, such as a Visitor Center and parking.

A footpath system will allow visitors to safely and comfortably tour the entire site and fully experience the domestic, personal, natural, and philosophical context in which the art on exhibit was created.

RESCUED BY ITS NEIGHBORS

Weir Farm is a pastoral island, surrounded by one of the most highly developed areas of New England, just 45 miles north of New York City. The property was saved from suburban encroachment through the efforts of local residents, assisted by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Critical grass-roots support for preserving the property came from the Weir Farm Heritage Trust, which now works in partnership with the NPS. Congress established Weir Farm National Historic Site in 1990, and TPL and the state transferred the land to the NPS soon after.

REUNITING AN HISTORIC LANDSCAPE WITH THE ART IT INSPIRED

The General Management Plan outlines an ambitious undertaking, with the goals of preserving the unmatched integrity of Weir Farm and capturing the artistic legacy that is preserved throughout the site. At the proposed Visitor Center, located in a rehabilitated structure near the site, the permanent collection of work created at Weir Farm will be on display, housed in a museum-quality environment, along with short-term special exhibitions.



BRANCHVILLE
Mahonri Mackintosh Young

Afternoon by the Pond, about 1908–1909, oil on canvas, Washington, D.C., The Phillips Collection.
Connecticut Birches, not dated, oil on canvas, Private Collection. *Branchville*, 1929, ink and watercolor, Private Collection.

WEIR FARM

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—Senator Joseph Lieberman



WEIR FARM
HERITAGE TRUST/
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
*A Partnership for Preserving an
American Artistic Tradition*

WEIR FARM NATIONAL
HISTORIC SITE
735 NOD HILL ROAD
WILTON, CT 06897

